FADS & FANCIES

Special Correspondence of The Evening Star.

PARIS, December 22, 1900.

Oh, how busy I have been this week! It has been nothing but rush. Just as I was ready to leave for Mme. De Neuilly's place what do you suppose happened? My tailor sent me word that if I could not be fitted before I left town he would not be able to let me have my evening cloak for the date he promised, so there was nothing for me to do but stay over a couple of days. The cloak is well worth the delay, however, for it is a beauty and something quite out of the ordinary. It is a rich cream brocade with bunches of roses scattered over its surface; roses which are so cunningly shaded that they appear embroidered. The rest is simple enough: no frills or fluffs, just a close-fitting affair reaching to the bottom of my skirt. The fur, which is Russian sable, gives it the desired richness, and this, I must say, is arranged in a unique fashion. The collar and undersleeves are made of it, of course; then a wide band goes around the shoulders, forming epaulets, and under the arms, giving a bolero effect, and the four ends join in front over the breast, running down to the bottom of the garment in a wide, straight band.

The other night as Paul and I were coming out of the Comedie Francaise we noticed a stunning woman. She was tall and slender, with reddish hair and a complexion of peaches and cream. Her hair was coiled very low, almost at the neck. In front it was parted on one side, and I think it waved naturally. She was bareheaded but for a spray of black velvet pansies with diamond centers which she wore on the left side.

A Lovely Combination.

As it took some little time to summon her carriage, I had an opportunity to examine her evening cloak, which was one of the richest I have ever seen. It was made of robin's egg blue or green—I could not see which in the strong electric light—and it was appliqued all over with narrow velvet ribbons forming stripes. You will never guess what color the ribbons were unless I tell you. They were of a rich wood brown. The combination of brown and that bluish green was artistic beyond words. Deep flounces of black chantilly over cream chiffon gave the desired softness. In place of fur on the wide, flaring collar and down the front was grebe. That it harmonized beautifully I am not prepared to deny; the silver white and the deep touches of golden brown and gray were just the colors needed. But what a barbarity—all that mass of breasts, with here and there a head to add to the ghastliness! Who says that women no longer wear stuffed birds? On the contrary, you can't take a ten-minute walk on the boulevard without being convinced of the uselessness of a crusade against woman's will in this direction.

But I am getting off the subject of evening cloaks. All the swell ones here have deep yoke effects which exaggerate very much the width of the shoulders. Below the yoke and extending well over the upper part of the arm there is usually a wide band of fur or a heavy roll of lace. Grotesque on short persons, you say? No, not if it is kept in proportion; but, of course, a girl with a stout figure should never attempt it. The trouble nowadays is that all the styles are designed for slender, willowy girls. Barbara has had a rather becoming affair made for her. It is of very lustrous pearl gray satin, and it has been crinkled by some new process which is in vogue here. There is a yoke of shirred chiffon and long ends of the same material. Instead of fur she has a trimming of heavy Russian lace, and the only touch of color is in the flame-colored lining, which never fails to startle me when I catch a glimpse of it.

The Gorgeousness Hidden.

This is a new wrinkle which Barbara's young friends are adopting. They have very simple frocks, made so that they look too mouselike and demure for anything, and then suddenly you catch a glimpse of some half hidden gorgeousness which takes your breath away. That is the simplicity which costs; but we don't grumble, because we know the fad will wear away soon, as all very young girls' fads do.

I have just bought one of those new hair ornaments made of tortoise shell which are fashionable for afternoon wear; mine is a huge bowknot. It is beautifully turned and twisted, but it feels so awkward in my hair that I am in continual terror lest it should fall out and immediately smash in a thousand bits. The trouble with those large hair ornaments is that they are all so top-heavy. Speaking of hair, guess what I caught Barbara doing the other day. The silly child was putting perfume on her hair. And now she wonders why it looks so rusty in spots! I gave her a bottle of heliotrope, which is the fashionable perfume here just now, and taught her how to place a tiny drop behind each ear. It gives the same effect as putting it on the hair, and it is a new trick much used by the smart set.

A Characteristic Trait.

There is one thing sensible about the Comtesse de Mirepoix—she doesn't mind being seen more than once in the same dress. This continual desire for a change is, after all, more characteristic of the parvenu than of the grande dame. I have seen her at least three times in the sapphire blue panne incrusted with black Chantilly lace which she wore at the marriage of Mlle. des Cars with the Vicomte d'Espeuilles. This wedding gown was apparently made over a lace foundation. Here and there it was slashed to show the rich lace, and wherever that was done little black velvet straps were crossed over the opening and held in place by tiny buttons of brilliants. This slashed effect is very often seen on the new gowns. If this continues perhaps by and by we shall have costumes as elaborate as those worn by the Tudors.

Black Lace Over Satin.

Before Mme. d'Espeuilles left Paris she bought a waist made of strips of black Chantilly over cream satin. The odd touch was given by three wired bows made of five different shades of red, from the palest coral to the deepest ox blood. This mixing up of reds is one of the latest things, and also one of the prettiest. Another example of it is the Comtesse de Ganay's new red velvet gown, which is shaded as beautifully as if it were a flower. But to return to the D'Espeuilles. Isn't it a shame that we are not to have them with us this winter? The vicomte is an attache of the French embassy in Vienna, so, of course, they have to live there for the present.

The latest evening hair decorations show golden roses with jeweled green velvet leaves. They look charming when worn by a brunette. The more conservative people, however, are discarding gilt entirely, now that the commoner folk are wearing it on all occasions. Beautiful and rich embroideries are supplanting all the glittering things, and we are promised an era of fine needlework. This is a good thing in more senses than one, for it will doubtless provide work for countless women who have seen better days and whose skill in embroidery is their one great talent.

CATHERINE TALBOT.

This style of Empire coat will be worn during the late winter and early spring almost to the exclusion of other styles. It is singularly becoming to a slender figure, and is comfortable to a degree. The one pictured above is of mastic French ladies' cloth, having a high collar and straps finished with iridescent pearl buttons. The hat is of black silk and tulle, dressed with scarlet roses.

WRAPS FOR EVENING WEAR.

A pretty theater cape of ivory white satin, lined with rose color and elaborately trimmed about the shoulders with lines of sable and heavy Russian lace. The skirt of the cape is slashed in lengths, strapped and fastened with brilliant ornaments, and through the slashings show knife pleatings of rose chiffon.

HOUSE-HOLD HINTS

According to tradition and custom, January 6, or Little Christmas, brings to a close the festivities of the holidays. Society folk who have clung to their country houses as long as possible prepare to return to town. The young people, home for the Christmas vacation, turn their faces more or less cheerfully toward their respective halls of learning. The public schools have opened and the droning voices of childhood proclaim to passers-by that the fountains of erudition are again unlocked. Now comes the housewife's opportunity for a grand "cl'arin' up."

The Christmas tree, despoiled of all its finery and uprooted from the place of honor, vanishes from sight, dragging supinely at the tail of the ashman's cart. The mistletoe, its osculatory mission happily fulfilled, and the holly, its glory departed, disappear from chandelier, pictures and balustrades, leaving a shower of stiff, dry leaves in their wake. The broom and dustpan now spring into active service, and the "housemaid's knee," brought on by enlarged activities, becomes the prevailing and fashionable disease.

St. Distaff's day, January 7, used to be considered by women of the olden times as the proper date for them to resume their work which the holidays had interrupted. The long, quiet days after Christmas, though no longer spent in spinning flax, are quite appropriately ushered in by this ancient "festival of the distaff." This is still the season in which all good housewives devote much time to their linen closets. In anticipation of the usual demand the shop windows are now filled with their annual tempting display of snowy table linen, hemstitched and embroidered bed linens, and fine towelling, to say nothing of all the ornamental accessories to the buffet and lunch table.

For the outer covering of beds there are all sorts of pretty and novel things in white and colors. Possibly the handsomest are those of heavy linen, embroidered in white by hand. Some of the more elaborate have the whole center embroidered, a broad embroidered border outlined with drawn work and a wide hem finished with a row of drawn work at the head. On brass beds these quilts take the place of the valence, hanging down on all sides. The monogram frequently appears at one side of the embroidered center. The durable Marseilles quilts come both plain woven and embroidered, in white or in colors.

The fancy for embroidery also extends to the finish of sheets and pillow cases. "Shams" are still much used, though many housekeepers prefer cases, into which the pillows are buttoned. These are large and square. They are laid aside at night, however, in favor of smaller pillows with plainer covers. Monograms or initials for sheets are two or three inches high and worked in the center just about the hem. For pillow cases the letters are smaller.

Sheets for double beds should be three yards long before hemming. This allows for a three-inch hem at the top, one-half the width at the bottom, and leaves the sheet a little more than two and three-quarters yards long after shrinkage in washing. A sheet large enough to tuck under and stay where it is put is the only kind sure to be a comfort to the user. The thrifty English fashion of covering the ends of comfortables with a width of thin muslin or cheese cloth which can be removed and washed whenever soiled is one that commends itself to all housekeepers. The untoward tendency of light-colored comforts to show soiling where they are tucked under the neck of the sleeper is in this way obviated.

In purchasing table linen the cream weave will be found more durable than the white or half bleached. While pattern tablecloths are more desirable for "best" than those cut from the web, the latter will be found much cheaper for everyday use. Cheap, sleezy damask is never advisable, the loose weave rendering it a poor investment, in point of service. The medium grades of either Scotch or Irish make will be found unequaled for satisfactory wearing qualities. Before hemming a tablecloth see that it is cut by the pattern. The thread makes the pattern and if one follows the pattern it takes less time than pulling the thread. While hemstitching makes a pretty finish, it cannot endure hard usage, and is therefore inappropriate for cloths that have to be frequently laundered. The best way to hem everyday linen is to turn and baste a narrow hem, then folding the hem back again on the right side of the cloth, sew the hem to the cloth by hand in an over-and-over seam. Then flatten and press the hem in place. The monogram or initial of the house mistress should be wrought diagonally in one corner in white linen or outline silk.

A new wrinkle in luncheon cloths is to have them woven in two tints, yellow and white, pink and white or green and white. With gold-banded china the yellow and white combination is remarkably effective. Nothing, however, is in better taste than the rich, thick, solid linen which is usually handsomely decorated by hand embroidery of border sprays and a center garland large enough to surround a vase of flowers or fruit piece. The pure white affords a capital background for crystal and silver as well as fancy doilies and pretty dishes.

Quantities of doilies are now sold, so many people using them without a tablecloth for breakfast and luncheon or Sunday night tea. Those of heavy linen with solid white embroidery are most durable and exceedingly popular. Very effective also are the Japanese grass linen sets, which come in both white and colored embroidery with Japanese floral designs.

In a talk before the New York Household Economic Association, Mrs. S. S. Woolman gave a number of practical suggestions in regard to buying silks. For beauty, durability and warmth, she said, a silk is a good thing to purchase. As for the cost, if it is pure and has been through the requisite number of processes to make it what it should be, it is worth more than its weight in silver. If any one thinks they are getting a good silk for 50 cents a yard they will find it almost all cotton. There is no silk obtainable at that price but the Japanese. Others, however well they may look, have been treated. Among the many adulterations used now in the manufacture of silk to give it the required gloss, "scroop" (the crisp rustle) and body, are the use of the rough floss silk for the woof which soon makes it wear shiny; an artificial silk made of cellulose and treated with chemicals; the introduction of Sea Island cotton, which looks almost the same as silk, but will not wear as long, and the use of mercerized cotton which gives transparent effect, and is excellent as cotton, but not as silk. Pressing is also resorted to in some brands of silk which increases the weight at the sacrifice of strength. Still another adulteration is in the weighting of silk by metallic salts placed in the dye vats. This makes the silk 400 per cent heavier, but injures its wearing quality.

Among the tests given for determining what one is buying in silk are, first, the microscope. Pure silk should give the appearance of fine, smooth tubes. Second, by burning. Pure silk burns slowly, with a slight odor. Cotton flares up quickly, and wool has a decided odor. Again, taste. If a silk has been weighted by metallic salts, it can be tasted. Last, and most certain, the price. If a silk is 50 cents a yard, you know enough about it. Black silk at $1 or $1.25 a yard is strong looking, but will not give satisfaction. Avoid crackly, stiff silk, with heavy cords at inexpensive prices.

Pure silk is twice as strong as hemp and three times as strong as flax. It is equal to strong wire of the same dimensions. It is good for underclothing because it absorbs water readily, therefore keeps the body dry, and is not a good conductor of heat.

Leather chairs can be cleansed with hot milk. Then polish with beeswax and turpentine melted to the consistency of thin cream.

White stains on furniture may be removed by hot milk and turpentine, oil and turpentine, or even kerosene.

A new departure at a Boston cooking school is the substitution of a piece of heavy sail cloth for the old-time molding board. This contrivance, known to the pupils as the "magic cloth," is about a yard and a half square, and may be laid flat upon any table. A strip of thick, seamless white webbing is also slipped over the rolling pin, and both pin and cloth are rubbed well with flour. Those who have tried it give unqualified approval to the invention, declaring that the cloth holds all the flour needed to keep moist dough from sticking to it, while it prevents the rubbing into the paste of any superfluous flour.

A delicious winter dessert, and an economical one, withal, is the steamed pudding, for which the clever mistress of Kenilworth ranch is justly famed. No guest ever tries this excellent pudding without following the precedent of Oliver Twist and calling for more. Its ingredients are two cupfuls of light chopped bread, one-half cupful chopped suet, taking care to free it from all strings; one-half cup molasses, one egg, one cupful raisins, seeded or the seedless; one cupful sweet milk, with one-half teaspoonful soda dissolved in it; one-half teaspoonful powdered cloves, one teaspoonful cinnamon and a pinch each of mace and salt. Mix thoroughly and boil two hours in a tin pudding dish. Eat with foamy sauce.

Foamy sauce may be made with boiling milk, wine, fruit juice or syrup. A good rule calls for a half cupful of butter beaten to a cream with one cup of powdered sugar. Add one teaspoonful of vanilla, two tablespoonfuls of currant jelly or grape juice, one-half cup of boiling water, and, lastly, the white of an egg well beaten. Whip all together until foamy and serve.

A good sandwich for a cold winter's evening is made by combining ham and Bermuda onions with rye or whole wheat bread as a foundation. Slice the bread evenly, butter lightly, lay on a thin slice of pink, juicy ham moistened with a suspicion—no more—of French mustard. Over this put thin slices of Bermuda onions, with a light sprinkling of salt, and cover. Press closely together and cut in diamonds or squares.

In preparing for a large company, where it is necessary to spread the sandwiches some hours before using, rinse a napkin in hot water and wrap around the pile. Then set in a cool place until needed, when they will be found as fresh as if just made.

The above is a charming visiting gown of pastel blue satin-finished cloth, trimmed with narrow lines of fur and a new Italian braid of woven silver and white. The hat is of white, with dashes of silver.

GOLDEN SLIPPERS

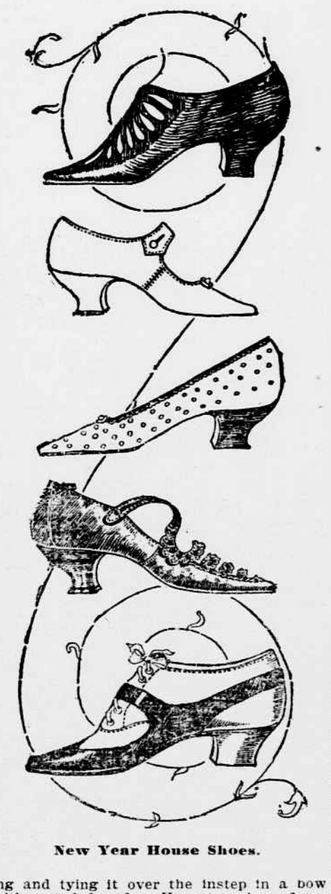
BUT ONLY FOR SMALL FEET, REMEMBER.

Luxurious Foot Coverings for the Carriage and House.

Written for The Evening Star.

Gilt slippers twinkle on ball room floors, but only the very dainty footed should wear them, for an amply planned pair of extremities, incased in gilded kid, gain in bulk and breadth. A refuge, and a worthy one, for those whose shoe number runs beyond three, is the black satin or silk slipper scintillating with tiny gold stars, and with these can be worn very captivating hose of black silk worked in gold threads up the instep. To even the ordinary black French kid or satin dancing shoe a high gold heel is given and the luxurious rose or blue quilted satin bed room pantoufle is decorated with bullion fringe about the top.

Another excuse for garnishing a slipper with gold is that of running a gold braid about the top of the delicate foot cover-



New Year House Shoes.

ing and tying it over the instep in a bow with tasseled ends. Very tapering of toe and lofty of heel are all the new evening shoes. For the nonce women have given up the use of delicate suede and patent leather ties and are finding novelty and satisfaction in slippers that are intricately strapped over the instep. The straps run up from a point low upon the toe and afford glimpses of the delicate openworked and embroidered hose. Properly shaped, the straps fulfill the double office of giving the foot an appearance of dainty slenderness and of holding the slippers close about the member it covers.

Pretty enough are the rose, white, green and black ooze skin slippers, stitched with gold threads in a series of lines converging at the toe, or in a scroll pattern of mingled gold and silver lines.

In Paris we hear, on the best authority, that mouse gray suede, satin, velvet slippers are esteemed above all others, so that very, very smart women are wearing exquisite little slippers made of finely cured mole and rat skin. The gray shod foot is considered far more harmonious with costumes of any and every color than the black or tan shoe, and many of these mole and rat skin slippers are finished over the instep with the head or complete body of a "wee bit mousie," whose eyes are diamonds. Gray silk hose that have the new satin finish accompany the quaint slippers, against which some women conceive a violent aversion, though the majority find a piquant pleasure in wearing on their toes the stuffed presentiment of the little beastie who, in the flesh, would make their blood run cold and their feet run fast.

The Lavender Bag.

The old-fashioned lavender bag still has a place in the linen chest, but for the person and personal clothing different scents are used. Powdered scents are preferred to liquid scents. They are not so strong and do not evaporate so soon.

HOW WOMEN SPOIL VISION.

Their Veils Are Sight Traps, and Some Are Worse Than Others.

From the London Mail.

Women are divided in their opinions upon the subject of the veil, but where you will find one to maintain that such an adornment fades the complexion you will find ten to aver that no penalties would prevent them from wearing the adornment.

Go and ask an oculist his opinion, and what he has to say on the topic is to pump condemnation upon every veil that is worn. Yet he will admit that, while some nets are extremely dangerous and deleterious to the eyes, others are almost uninjurious.

There are fashions in nets and gauzes, and many are the variations with which the veil is worn. But in England it always covers the eyes, and it is here that the danger arises.

Of all the veils ever tried the ideal one is yet to be discovered. Some women can trace step by step its evolution throughout the century. They have heard their grandmothers talk about the white lace "fall" that used to be liked, and themselves can recollect the thick green, blue, gray, white and green gauze horrors worn to protect the complexion from tan. Those veils were followed by thinner silk ones, which in their turn were deposed in favor of those of thread lace, after which came the many abominations still exploited, to wit: meshnets dotted and patterned in various ways.

Just now women are beginning to shorten nets and falls considerably. Indeed, in Paris they are wearing most curtailed ones again, and a feeling has also come in there for the utter banishment of the veil. A more uncomfortable and imbecile affair for afternoon teas than the mask the chin veil is cannot be imagined.

It is a sign of grace, perhaps, that the question which is being much debated now among smart people is whether the veil does not accomplish so much harm to the visual organs as to outweigh all other considerations in its favor. They wonder if a veil could not be contrived that would leave the eyes uncovered, while it beautified and protected the rest of the face. As a pattern nothing could be better than the Turkish woman's yashmak, which is justly held to be the most modest face covering in existence.

Now, as to good and bad patterns of veils, considered not from the point of view of beauty, but of visual expediency.

The very best is a veil as fine as gossamer, which can be most becoming, too. It has no spots at all upon it, and so does not worry the poor, tortured eyes that have to dodge spots, or vainly and unconsciously try to focus them, one of the worst possible exercises to which weak or imperfect sight can be put. The retrograde step is taken by Russian net veiling, which need not, however, be very trying if the mesh be fine, for it is unspotted.

Then come the quite condemned veils, which have chenille spots all over them: they are bad in proportion as their dots are close and large or scanty and small; but they are less sight-wearing than a veil that is patterned as well as dotted, a veritable agony to sensitive sight. White veils are often much more evil in their effects than black, for the material, be it tulle or net, possesses a faculty for dazzling the vision and making everything seen through it wavering and ill-defined. Finally, has not the case been proved that those who are conscious of strain, a lack of clarity of sight, or weariness after wearing a veil, should give up the task of looking smart at the expense of vision. Even the strong argument in favor of veils of a sensible and clear mesh, which the oculists do not attempt to deny, namely, that such nets do keep the eyes from the assaults of grit, especially during a drive or while cycling and motoring, should not appeal to the weak-sighted.

Ready-Made Dress Ornaments.

There is very little difficulty in the ornamentation of a bodice or a skirt nowadays, as suitable decorations of lace or silk passementerie can be purchased ready for attachment to match any kind of material and in almost any color, and innumerable ideas as to their arrangement can be obtained from the leading fashion journals.